

## Being okay by Jancys-Blue-Bayou

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**Summary:** Missing scenes filling in the blanks in 3x06 between the end of the hospital fight scene and everyone at the cabin the next day. Nancy POV, Jancy-centric with Mike, Will, El, Max and Lucas in the background.

## Being okay

"Nancy! Are you okay?! *Are you okay?!*"

She fervently nods her head in answer. Her gaze is locked with Jonathan's and his eyes are wide with worry and fear. His large hands are holding her shoulders, steadying her. Anchoring her to this world, reminding her she's still in it. Her hands reaches to touch his arms, to make absolutely sure that Jonathan is indeed still here too, right with her. He pulls her in closer, as close as he can and wraps her up in his big embrace. She flings her arms around his neck and lets the feeling of safety wash over her for a second. She's in Jonathan's arms so she is safe, Jonathan's arms is the safest place to be. He whispers that he loves her. She knows, and she loves him too and reminds him of the fact.

But they can't stay here. As much as she'd like to stay in his arms forever they have to get up, quick now to go see where that...*thing* went, whatever they're going to call the thing that was created when the disgustingly... gooey insides of Bruce and Tom morphed together into one giant terrifying monster blob.

They get up together, him helping her up to her slightly shaky legs. She gives another "I'm okay" nod and they dash out of the hospital. Down the drain. It's going down the drain. To *where?*

"Where's it going?" Max is the one to pose the question.

"I don't know," El quietly answers. None of them has the answer of course.

She puts a supportive hand on Jonathan's back. He hisses in pain and winces. She immediately removes her hand, his reaction hitting her with a pang in the heart. She feels careless, for a minute she's been so focused on... still being alive and Jonathan still being alive and that monster still being alive that she temporarily forgot what a savage beating he took. In front of her. Seeing Jonathan be hurt like that felt worse than being hurt herself. And god, what more did he have to endure when they were separated? How bad is it?

"Are you okay?" She whispers instead.

"I'm okay," he's quick to answer and reaches out for her hand instead.  
"You?"

"Okay," she simply answers. She'll have to pry out a more accurate answer of him later because she knows that was a big fat lie. Just like he probably knows she's not totally honest either when she says she's okay.

"Okay what the hell was that?!" Lucas finally is the one to say it.

"Yeah, what the fuck happened in there?!" Her brother swears as he and the rest of the gang turn to look at her and Jonathan for an explanation.

"Where's Mrs. Driscoll?" Will asks.

"She was gone, she wasn't there. But Tom was. And Bruce," she starts to explain.

"Who's Bruce?" Max asks.

"He... was, a reporter at the paper. And an asshole."

"Was? What happened?"

"Tom came in when we were in Mrs. Driscoll's room. He wasn't himself, even more than before, when we saw him last... now he was... he was something else. He came at us so Jonathan knocked him over the head with a vase and we ran. But in the hallway we saw Bruce and he was just like Tom... it's spreading. There were people, doctors... lying bloodied everywhere."

"It's turning more..." El says. They nod.

"We ran. We locked ourselves in a room and tried calling for help but couldn't get through. Then Bruce came... he got in... he said he was there for me..."

"I tried to stop him, but he was so strong..." Jonathan mumbles.

"Too strong. Inhumanely strong," she asserts. "He's a big guy and all but he could lift you off the floor Jonathan, he could throw you across the room it was insane... and when he pushed me it felt like a freight train hit me."

"Are you guys okay?" Will asks, worried.

"Yeah... I stabbed him with a pair of scissors, in the back, he was going to... Jonathan... I just had to stop him. It slowed him down but it didn't stop him. Then he came after me so I ran."

"I tried to get up but before I could Tom was there and..." Jonathan just gestures to his facial wounds instead of finishing the sentence. It makes her heart ache.

"Bruce found me... I got a fire extinguisher and hid behind some curtains. I caught him by surprise and just bashed him over the head with it... again... and again... until he was..."

"I got hold of the scissors and stabbed Tom in the neck..."

"You killed them?" Mike and Will responds at once.

"It was them or us..." she mumbles.

"They weren't really human... anymore... but..." Jonathan adds. That is true. But still she doesn't know how to feel it's a lot... she... they, just killed their bosses. Horrible and... inhuman as they were still...

"They went still for a second then... the lights went out..."

"We noticed," Will says.

"Then the body started... shaking," Jonathan continues.

"Face turning... red... bloody... like the insides came out..." she adds.

"Then they just... melted..."

"Melted?" Lucas questions.

"Yeah," she confirms. "Their whole body just... melted into... goo..."

that formed into a blob that just... started moving, crawling down the floor."

"They met in the middle and merged into one and turned into... that... what you saw."

Everyone stands quiet, processing. Unsure of what to say about what just happened.

"El, thank you. Thank you so much I thought I was..." She says. Jonathan's grip of her hand tightens. She squeezes his hand back.

"You're welcome," El quietly says.

"What do we do now?" Lucas asks.

"We go home," she decides. "Everyone in the car."

"Are you okay to drive?" Jonathan whispers as they walk towards her mother's station wagon, the kids behind them.

"Yeah," she quietly confirms.

In the car soon as she's turned out of the parking lot Jonathan puts his hand on her arm. She adjusts, slinking her small hand into his large hand and they stay like that the rest of the journey. In the back the kids are talking.

"We have to find out where it went," Mike says.

"How many flayed are there?" Max asks.

"Could be dozens," Lucas estimates.

"Or more," Will adds.

"We have to stop it," Lucas says.

"To do that we need to know where it is," Mike mutters.

"I can look... in the void," El says.

"For the Mind Flayer?" Will asks.

"No, for them... Tom, Bruce... Heather..."

"When? Tonight?"

"Tired..."

"Okay," she cuts in. "We need to know where it's hiding. We have to kill it. El can look in the void. And I have some leads we can try. But we're not doing it tonight. El's tired. We're tired. We do it tomorrow."

All the kids nod.

"Sleepover in the basement?" Mike suggests.

They all nod again, she sees in the rearview mirror.

"Nancy is that you?" Her mom's voice calls from the living room as soon as they've stepped through the door into the hall. She looks at Jonathan, bloodied and bruised and drenched in sweat and he looks back at her and she knows she looks about the same.

"Yeah... thanks for letting me use the car all day um, I just picked up Mike and his friends..." she turns to Mike and the others and mouths "Cover for me!" And they all nod. "Uh, but I have a headache I think I'm just gonna go to bed. Night!"

She drags Jonathan up the stairs with her while Mike and the others go into the living room and ask their mom if it's okay that they have a sleepover. She and Jonathan goes straight for the shower.

"Wait," Jonathan stops her when she goes to take her dress off. "Careful, there's glass..." he explains and gently starts picking shards of broken glass from her hair.

Her mind casts her back to the moment just before the window shattered above her as El threw the monster through it, to when the monster was over her and she was sure she was going to die.

"It's okay, I got you, I got you," Jonathan calms her as she reflexively clasps onto him as her pulse races. he holds her steady with one arm while he continues to pick out glass shards with one hand. "I got you. It's okay," he tells her when he's finished and holding her shoulders

with both hands.

She nods and starts to undress. He does the same, pulling his t-shirt over his head. She looks up and sees the reflection of his back in the mirror. The sight makes her gasp.

"Jonathan, your back..."

"Your back," he repeats, turning her around to inspect hers which she knows undoubtedly is heavily bruised from being thrown into a wall. Twice. But it's nothing compared to Jonathan whose entire back is covered in severe bruising in different shades from blue to purple to straight up black. One big mark in particular stands out, it must've been where the chair hit him.

"No your... you..." she starts but can't get any more words out. Seeing his bruises, thinking about Jonathan being choked, being thrown across the room, being hit with a chair, and whatever else happened to him when they were separated... it hurts her much more than her own bruises and brings tears to her eyes.

"Hey, hey it's okay... I'm okay, really..." he softly says and pulls her into a hug.

"No you're not..." she insists, mumbling against his chest.

"Okay fine but... hey it's over now... it's over and we're both still standing... in that way it's okay. Come on."

He leads her into the shower and pulls the curtain. Holds her hands as he turns the faucet and water sprays down on them. He lets her wash first and gently helps her clean her back, feather light touch so careful not to hurt her in the slightest. She closes her eyes and turns her face close to the spray to wash all the gunk off her face. The image in her mind of that thing on top of her, baring its teeth and slobbering over her, is one she'd love to erase from her memory but it's there every time she closes her eyes. In a flash her mind jumps back two years ago and another image of another monster who wouldn't leave her alone. Then she had a panic attack in the shower, almost hyperventilating as she felt like she was back there, in the Upside Down all alone with the monster.

She's not alone now though. She turns into Jonathan and he wraps her in a hug. She rests her forehead on his shoulder. He whispers words of comfort and sweetnothings in her ear. She's able to gather herself. She moves him under the spray and helps him clean up, careful of his wounds and back.

Just like she has taken to leaving a few items of clothing of her own at his house for all the times she stays the night there, some of his has ended up in her closet for the same reason. She goes digging there when they're out of the shower. Hands him a pair of boxers and snags one of his t-shirts for herself. It's her favorite kind of nightie now. Something else catches her eye. His yellow pajama pants. They ended up here because the first time she invited him over to stay the night sweet Jonathan brought them with him because he "didn't want to be presumptuous". She had told him then that he looks very cute in them but that she also very much likes him in less, and since then he's always just sleeping in his underwear around her like he'd normally do. Another tiny little privacy barrier of Jonathan Byers that she was pleased to get through. But the yellow pajama pants themselves holds a special place in her heart, forever associated with that night, their first night together. Well, their first together *like that*. She puts them on now for added comfort.

Jonathan's sitting down on the edge of her bed when she turns around. She looks him over, again wincing at his injuries.

"Hey," she softly says as she steps over to him.

"Hey," he answers, looking up at her as she cups his cheeks and inspects his facial wounds.

"How are you, really? Don't say okay. Let me take care of you."

"Okay. I... could use an aspirin."

His gallows humor makes her grin.

"Okay. Hold on I got some in my purse."

She retrieves it and watches him swallow the pill.

"Are you dizzy?"



"No."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

"What... happened when we were apart? Please tell me."

Jonathan hesitates for a moment, then shares.

"Okay... I tried to get up but Tom slammed me down again... and into a cabinet... and a cart... and I went out for a second when he slammed my head against the floor but..."

"Jonathan..."

"I'm fine really..."

"No you're not... Jesus... seriously Jonathan how are you feeling?"

"My head is pounding and my back is killing me. But it's okay. You're okay right?"

"Compared to you I'm great."

"Bruce didn't get to you again right?"

"No, I ran and ran and found the fire extinguisher to defend myself with. Went into a room and hid behind the curtains. He went after me but looked in the wrong place first. Then I just bashed him over the head."

"Good... I was so worried about you... can we just lay down?"

"Okay. Let me just clean your cuts first."

He winces a little as he adjusts in bed, finally finding a way to lay on his side facing her. She lies on her side, face right next to his. She'd press her forehead against his if it wasn't for the nasty cut on his.

"Are you comfy? With your back..."

"Yeah, it's good. You?"

"Yeah."

His left hand is laid between them, palm up. She lays her own on top of it, lining up their scars and interlacing their fingers.

"As if we needed any more," she jokes. He chuckles and squeezes her hand. Shared trauma. She could do without the trauma for both him and herself. But at least they have each other. She has no idea what she'd done if she'd gone through all she has on her own, without Jonathan. Or well, she knows she wouldn't be here now. That's for sure.

"I really thought it was over, that I was done for..."

"I thought I'd lose you," he admits and she can see tears threatening to spill over for him. "I couldn't get the door down, if El hadn't.. I don't know..." he croaks out before the tears do come.

"It's okay, it's okay. You didn't. I'm right here. We're both still here," she soothes him and presses a soft kiss to his lips.

"I love you," he whispers.

"I love you too."

They share a comfortable silence as his tears subside. She blinks her own away. He then quietly pipes up.

"I feel different."

"Because of what you had to do? To Tom?"

"Yeah..."

"I feel the same... but we had to do it. I feel weird but we had to. It was them or us."

"I know. Still..."

"I know."

In the morning Jonathan dresses in a pair of jeans and a short sleeved

shirt he left in her room at an earlier occasion and climbs out her bedroom window and comes around to the front while she goes down and tells her mother that Jonathan is "coming over early for breakfast" which her mother doesn't mind of course since she adores Jonathan. Soon after they have sat down at the table Mike and the rest come up from the basement. They all try to act *normal*. Mike pointedly looks at her before "begging" for a ride and she is quick to volunteer herself and Jonathan "if we can take the station wagon again mom". Their mom readily agrees, undoubtedly happy that she and Mike aren't at each others throats.

"Where do you want to do this El?" She turns around and asks once they're all in the car.

"Cabin," the girl answers. "But, we need stuff first."

"What stuff?"

"Pictures. It helps me connect."

"Right. So we need pictures of Tom and Bruce..."

"And Heather," Mike butts in.

"And Billy," Max adds.

"Right," she nods and thinks for a second. "Hang on, I'll be right back."

She gets out of the car and hurries back inside the house.

"Forgot my purse!" She tells her mother and dashes up the stairs to her room.

Rummaging around she finds the high school yearbook. Flips through the pages quickly until she gets to the seniors. There he is, Billy Hargrove. He really manages to look just as much as a douche as he is. She gets out a pair of scissors and cuts out his photo. Back down the stairs and into the kitchen. Her dad fittingly is finished with the paper by now. Tom as the editor doesn't have his photo in it but a story she knows Bruce wrote a few days ago is on page 5. She cuts out his byline photo and hurries back out to the car.

"Okay, that's halfway there already," she says and shows them what she got. Jonathan smiles at her. "We'll have to go back to Heather's house for the rest," she continues and hands over the cutouts to El.

She puts the car in drive and rolls out of the driveway. It feels good to be on their feet again, to have a plan of action, something to do. She's past Dearborn when Mike pipes up from the back.

"Wait, couldn't you have gotten Heather's yearbook photo too?"

"Shit," she didn't even think of that. "Well we would've had to go their house anyway for Tom's picture so there," she looks into the rearview mirror sticks her tongue out at Mike.

They don't bother knocking this time around at the Holloways house. Jonathan opens the door and they all step in somewhat apprehensive at first. They can't be totally sure the house is still empty. She and Jonathan walk in the front as they go from room to room making sure.

"There we go," her brother suddenly calls out when they get to the living room. He strides over to the mantle piece and picks up a picture frame, turns it in his hand and smashes the glass against the mantle piece.

"Mike!" She admonishes.

"What?" He counters and holds up the family photo he's fished out of the broken frame.

"Alright well, lets get out of here then," Jonathan says and they start to leave.

While the kids walk in front of them back down the driveway Jonathan takes her hand in his again.

"I want to call all the people I talked to about the story again. Maybe we can get something there, if El's thing doesn't work."

"Sounds good," he nods.

"I really hope this works. We need to know where it went... and what

it wants. And how to stop it."

"It'll work. And when we know where it is... we'll stop it. Somehow."

"Yeah but how?"

"I don't know, but I'm sure my girlfriend will think of something. She's the smartest human being on the planet and the bravest and is good with a gun and I'm never doubting her again," he smiles at her.

"Thanks," she grins and looks down. "I really needed *that* Jonathan Byers pep talk."

"Anytime."